

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed June 26, 2007.

I. Summary of Examiner's Rejections

Prior to the Office Action mailed June 26, 2007, claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, 24-28, and 30-33 were pending in the Application. In the Office Action, claims 10, 12-14, and 16 were objected to due to informalities. Claims 6, 7, 14, 16, 18, 22, 24, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. Claims 1-2, 4-7, 9-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, and 24-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,101,506 to Ukai et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,894,333 to Kanda et al. Claims 30-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ukai in view of Kanda as applied to claims 1, 9, 17, and 25 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,238,106 to Rosati.

II. Summary of Applicants' Amendments

The present Response amends claims 1, 2, 6-7, 9-10, 12-14, 16-18, 22, 24-25, 27-28, 30-33, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, 24-28, and 30-33. Reconsideration of the Application and of the claims in light of the following arguments is respectfully requested.

III. Claim Objections

In the Office Action, Claims 10, 12-14, and 16 were objected to due to informalities. It was stated in the Office Action that "*An* article of manufacture" should be replaced by "*The* article of manufacture." These claims have been amended accordingly to overcome these claim objections. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these claims.

IV. Claims Rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112

In the Office Action, Claims 6, 7, 14, 16, 18, 22, 24, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. It was stated in the Office Action that these claims were rejected because the phrase "may be" renders the claims indefinite. Claims 2 and 10 also contain

the phrase “may be.” To overcome these rejections, claims 2, 6, 7, 10, 14, 16, 18, 22, 24, and 27 have been amended. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added to these claims and respectfully request reconsideration of these claims.

V. Claims Rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-2, 4-7, 9-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, and 24-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,101,506 to Ukai et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,894,333 to Kanda et al.

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended by the present Response to more clearly define the embodiment of the invention therein. As amended, claim 1 defines:

1. (Currently amended) A method of organizing a plurality of objects, comprising the steps of:
 - receiving user selections of multiple objects from the plurality of objects;
 - creating one or more groups of objects from the multiple objects;
 - designating a representative object for each of the groups of objects;
 - searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter, and
 - for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, returning the representative objects of any groups of which any of the particular plurality of objects that meet the search parameter is a are members; and
 - for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, returning the particular objects;
 - displaying the returned representative objects of the groups of objects, the returned representative objects improving organization of objects and saving display space; and
 - displaying the particular objects.

Claim 1 defines that for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, the method returns the representative objects of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members. Further, these claims require that for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, the method returns the particular objects. Further, these claims require that the returned representative objects improve organization of objects and save display space (Spec., paras. 0016, 0057, and 0120-0121).

Ukai discloses a method and system for managing files by version. Regarding searching, in Fig. 21, the user selects either buttons “All File” search or “Representative File.” For a representative file search, files having the file name entered by the user, for example “Catalog,” are retrieved from the representative files. In this example, “Hitachi Catalog Vol. 5” and “H & H Catalog” have been hit. (col. 20, lines 49-53; col. 21, lines 31-34; Fig. 21).

Ukai does not show or discuss an example of resulting files for an “all file” search. Ukai discloses, however, that the range of search can be limited to the representative files with a view to reduce the time taken for the search when compared with the method of searching all the files. (col. 20, lines 43-45). Thus, for a search parameter of a file name entered by the user, presumably an all file search returns all files having the file name entered by the user. Claim 1 requires searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter. Claim 1 further requires that for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and *that are part of one or more groups*, returning *the representative objects of groups* of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members. Returning all files that meet a search parameter, as disclosed in Ukai, is not the same as returning representative objects of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members, as required by claim 1.

Kanda discloses a representative image display method for video images. In Fig. 6, each scene display area 156 displays the representative image of that scene and a scene partition data display area 158 displays each scene’s start point (start time) and end point (end time). (col. 7, lines 26-32). The user first selects a scene. For example, in Fig. 14, the topmost scene is selected. Next, the specified time is entered, for example, through a keyboard, and the “current time” in Fig. 14 is initialized with the specified time. In the figure, the allowable input is in the range of scene start time 00:00:00:00 to end time 00:02:04:20. In the example of Fig. 14, the time 00:01:02:28 is specified. The user can use playback button 153 to playback the motion image for the selected scene and a stop button 154 stop the motion image being played back. (col. 7, lines 21-23; col. 9, lines 29-30 and 36-41).

In Kanda, the *plurality of objects* is images from scenes, such as the three separate scenes shown in Fig. 14. Each scene is a group of images (*group of objects*), and the representative image is the image representing the “group.” In Kanda, however, the user first selects a scene. From the scene (group), the user enters a designated time (*search parameter*). Kanda discloses that the user performs a search on one scene (group), not a search on images from all of the

scenes (plurality of objects). Thus, performing a search on one group in plurality of objects, as disclosed in Kanda, is not the same as searching the plurality of objects, as required by claim 1.

As such, Applicants respectfully submit that Ukai and Kanda fail to teach or suggest that for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, the method returns the representative objects of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members; that for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, the method returns the particular objects; and that the returned representative objects improve organization of objects and save display space. Applicants respectfully submit that the embodiment as defined in claim 1 is neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, Ukai or Kanda, taken alone or in combination, and respectfully request reconsideration of this claim.

Claims 9, 17, and 25

The comments provided above with respect to claim 1 are hereby incorporated by reference. Claims 9, 17, and 25 have been similarly amended to more clearly define the embodiments therein. For similar reasons as provided above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 9, 17, and 25, as amended, are likewise neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 10, and 18

Claims 2, 10, and 18 as amended require that one or more of the plurality of objects comprises membership in more than one of the one or more groups of objects. In the Office Action, it was stated that an object [a particular photograph (file) for example] may be part of more than one group [may be in both a catalog and an album, or even in two different catalogs for example]. (Ukai, figs. 1-4). The emphasis of the system disclosed in Ukai is to manage files by version, each of these objects (files) is part of only one group. Theoretically, a file could be in both a catalog and an album, for example, but Ukai does not disclose this.

In the Office Action, it was also stated that an object [Hitachi Catalog Vol. 3] may be part of [linked into (35)] more than one group [Hitachi Catalog and Hitachi Catalog 2]. (Ukai, fig. 4) Ukai discloses that a plurality of files can be created based on a given document file. These files cannot be managed only with the aid of the version, so a link-destination file name is used. In

the Hitachi Catalog example, for the file labeled “Hitachi Catalog” and the version name “Vol. 3” the link-destination is “Hitachi Catalog 2,” which means that a series of files having the file name “Hitachi Catalog 2” are derived from “Hitachi Catalog, Vol. 3.” (Ukai, col. 11, lines 39-49). The series of files in Hitachi Catalog 2 are separate from the “Hitachi Catalog files.” “Linked into (35)” is a pointer, which is not the same as “being part of,” as required by these claims.

As such, Ukai does not disclose that one or more of the plurality of objects comprises membership in more than one of the one or more groups of objects, as required by these claims. Applicants respectfully submit that the embodiment as defined in claims 2, 10, and 18 is neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, Ukai or Kanda, taken alone or in combination, and respectfully request reconsideration of this claim.

Claims 4-7, 12-14, 16, 20-22, 24, 26-28

Claims 4-7, 12-14, 16, 20-22, 24, 26-28 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable in view of the comments provided above. Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations, which render them patentable in their own right. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

Claims 30-33

Claims 30-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ukai in view of Kanda as applied to claims 1, 9, 17 and 25 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,238,106 to Rosati.

Claims 30-33 have been amended to require that the step of designating a representative is performed by designating the first object selected during the step of *creating one or more groups*. These amendments were made to correct referencing in these claims. (Spec., para. 0059). Claims 30-33 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable in view of the comments provided above. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 30-33 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, the cited

references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations, which render them patentable in their own right. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

VI. Conclusion

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if she can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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